

**Marxism vs. Social  
Democracy**

Bela Kun

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**MARXISM**  
versus  
**SOCIAL  
DEMOCRACY**

by  
BELA KUN

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ADDRESS DELIVERED AT PLENUM EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST  
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## Marxism versus Social Democracy.

Comrades,

March 14th, 1933, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the day on which humanity lost the most important mind it has ever possessed. Karl Marx, originator of Communism, founder and leader of the International Workingmen's Association, the man who gave the proletariat "the consciousness of its own position and needs, the consciousness of the conditions of emancipation," died on March 14th, 1883. In the workshop of this mind was created *the most potent, most complete and most comprehensive* work to be found in the history of humanity.

Marx's doctrine is the most potent doctrine because it is the reflection of *the objective truth*. It did not proceed from any theoretical principle with its nucleus born in the "realm of reason" in order to draw its further conclusions from this principle. On the contrary, by their content Marx's teachings are the theoretical expression of the real struggle which was going on in his day and is going on now in capitalist society with its anarchic mode of production, that struggle between those who possess and those who do not

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possess, between the capitalists and the wage-workers. They constitute the answer to questions raised by the foremost minds of humanity before Marx, but hitherto left unanswered. They are the answer to all the questions put by *an actual historical movement*, questions which we are being made hourly to face by the working-class movement of to-day.

Marx's doctrine is *the most complete* there is. It contains *the definitively discovered law of development governing human history*; which, as Frederick Engels said in his funeral oration at the bier of his dead companion in their joint labours and struggle, "contains the simple fact covered up under ideological over-growth that man must, before all else, eat, drink, live and clothe himself, and then only can he engage in politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of existence and thereby the corresponding degree of economic development of a people or a period forms the basis on which the State institutions, legal views, art and even the religious ideas of the people concerned developed and on which they therefore must be explained—and not vice versa, as heretofore."

Marx's doctrine does more than expound the general law of development of human history. It also contains the *special* law of development of the capitalist method of production and of bourgeois society engendered by it.

The great secret of capitalist production and its concurrent bourgeois society was a sealed book to the best representatives of bourgeois economy who investigated the capitalist method of production and deemed it an eternal institution, as well

as to be the best representatives of pre-Marxian utopian socialism who criticised and rejected the capitalist system. *The discovery of surplus value* by Marx revealed this secret of capitalist production and bourgeois society. The wage-worker in capitalist society sells his labour power to the owner of the means of production. It is not a question here of any *relation of things*: product of labour and means of production, but of *relations between people* of whom one has only his labour power while the other owns the means of production. Commodity labour power is endowed with the peculiar property that even when purchased at its full value it creates more value than the equivalent of its own value, *i.e.*, than is necessary for the reproduction of the commodity labour power. The private appropriation of these unpaid surplus values is the basis of the capitalist method of production and it is precisely this surplus value which is the source from which the capitalist class draws its growing wealth.

The discovery of surplus value led not only to the discovery of the motive power of the development of capitalist production, but also to the discovery of the driving force of the struggle between the two classes arising historically under capitalism: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Socialism was no longer a fortuitous discovery of this or that "gifted mind" but recognised as a necessary consequence of capitalist development and of the class struggle.

Capital—created by the workers—brings about the ruin of the small producers. It multiplies the class of the wage-workers. By developing the forces of production (machines, etc.), it constantly increases the earnings of the capitalists



derived from the work of the former. Capital becomes more and more concentrated and finally leads to monopolist domination by a handful of the most powerful magnates. Production becomes more and more socialised. Hundreds of thousands and millions of workers are embraced in a few industrial organisations. The product of their social labour is, however, appropriated by a mere handful of capitalists.

In the process of the concentration of capital, human labour power is increasingly displaced by machinery. This leads, on the one hand, to the most intensified accumulation of wealth for the capitalists; on the other, to increasing misery for the working class. This also gives rise to the giant army of the unemployed. This *industrial reserve army* renders possible a still more intensive exploitation of the working class by the capitalists.

This constant expansion of production (which is accompanied by a steady decline in the purchasing power of the masses), leads to crises of over-production which become more aggravated at each repetition and shake the capitalist system more and more.

This historical tendency of development of capitalism was *strikingly* epitomized in "Capital," the main work of Marx, in the following words:

"The expropriation of the immediate producers was accomplished with merciless Vandalism, and under the stimulus of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious. Self-earned private property, that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent labouring-individual with the conditions of his labour, is supplanted by capitalistic private property,

which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labour of others, *i.e.*, on wages-labour."

"That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour-process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world-market, and this, the international character of the capitalistic régime. Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."



Even thirty years ago these words read like a prophecy, but to-day they already *toll the death knell of moribund capitalist society and sound the tocsin of the attacking proletarian armies* which, in the midst of the devastating world economic crisis, are storming the fortresses of capitalist exploitation and oppression on the sure ground of the post-war crisis of decaying capitalism. These prophetic words, the recognition, too, of the laws revealed by them, have brought it about that *socialism which was a utopia has become a science and finally a reality*, a science which records the objective law of development of society to socialism as dictated by nature.

Therefore the doctrine of Marx is *the most complete* which has been created through the collective efforts of the thought of all preceding generations and through the genius of their individual thinkers.

Marx accomplished the discovery of the *general* laws of motion of the development of human history as well as of nature through the cognition of *materialist philosophy*, on the basis of the cognition that, as Feuerbach said, "thinking is to be explained from being and not being from thinking." Marx, however, did not stop at this general cognition. Dialectics—the science of the laws of the development of the external world as well as of human thinking which was liberated by Marx and Engels from the idealist envelope of the Hegelian system of philosophy—in its materialist form—the doctrine of the relativity of thinking as a reflection of matter eternally in motion—confronted Marx with the question whether different stages in the development of society had not different and peculiar laws of motion. Marx dis-

covered the peculiar laws of motion the capitalist method of production and of bourgeois society built upon it.

Yet he went farther than that. In contradistinction to everything that had existed before him in science, Marx's doctrine is not only an *explanation* of society, of its objective laws of motion, but is simultaneously the doctrine of the *transformation* of society.

In the notes by Marx on Feuerbach penned in the Spring of 1845 when, together with Engels, he wrote "German Ideology," which was both the foundation of Marxism and the balance sheet, if you like, presented to bourgeois ideology, we read:

"The philosophers only give different interpretations of the world, but the point is to *transform* it."

The doctrine of Marx is the *first* not only to give a world outlook which is not only a *Weltanschauung*, a world philosophy, but a doctrine of the *transformation* of the world and a *guide for effecting this transformation*.

It consists not only in that which the materialists taught even before Marx, namely that

"Man is a product of circumstances and upbringing; modified man is therefore a product of other circumstances and changed upbringing."

"Circumstances are modified by man," reads the great, historic, epoch-making discovery of Marx, by which not only was philosophy freed from the shackles of *intuitive* materialism but theory also—through materialist dialectics—was transferred to *practical, human, perceptible activity*.



"Man himself makes his own history" is what the great discovery of Marx denotes. The recognition of this fact has made *active agents* out of the proletarians instead of merely *passive* ones.

Society divided into classes accomplishes its development in the class struggle. The class struggle is the basis of its development. The class struggle is the driving force in the history of humanity.

The proletarians have not only been changed from passive to active agents but from active *individuals to exponents of their class and its consciousness*. Thus Marx developed the kernel of his doctrine.

#### MARX'S TEACHING ON THE WORLD HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE PROLETARIAT AS CREATOR OF THE NEW SOCIETY.

In his letter to Weydemeyer, dated March 5th, 1872, a year after the Paris Commune, the first revolution of the proletariat, Marx himself described this kernel of his doctrine in the following manner:

"What I did was to prove, first: that the existence of classes is linked only to definite historical stages of development; second: that the class struggle leads necessarily to the dictatorship of the proletariat; third: that this dictatorship itself forms only a transition to the abolition of all classes and to classless society."

The historical rôle of the proletariat, as the creator of the new society, consists therefore in the conquest of its own class dictatorship as the pre-condition of the abolition of all classes and the creation of classless society.

Thus the most important point was discovered:

the path to Socialism, the path to the liberation of the proletariat, the direction of the leap humanity must take from the land of necessity into the realm of liberty, into socialism.

The science of Marxism is likewise "an historically moving, a revolutionary force." Science and revolution are united in Marxism not through the personal qualities of the creator of the doctrine, but internally and inseparably through the method—through *materialist dialectics*. Therefore Marxism is not only the most potent, the most complete, but also *the most comprehensive* of all doctrines that have been created in the field of the cognition of nature and of human society.

This most potent, most complete and most comprehensive of all doctrines, which itself represents an historically moving, revolutionary force, is *the theory of a class*. It lays no claim to hovering above the classes. It lays no claim to being non-partisan science, without pre-conditions. It is the theory of the revolutionary class of the proletariat and its *revolutionary class party*—the Communist Party!

Let toothless Kautsky repeat a hundred and a thousand times that the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the quintessence of Marxism; let his disciples keep on repeating after him such chatter as that the dictatorship of the proletariat was a "youthful aberration" of Marx and Engels. Marx himself attests the fact that his doctrine can only be the theory of the revolutionary workers, of the party that struggles for the dictatorship of the proletariat and materialises it.

The revolutionisation of the working class, the historical mission of which is the revolutionary



overthrow of existing society, could only be effected by anchoring socialist theory in the consciousness of this very class. On the other hand, the transformation of utopian socialist theory from an "absolute truth," "independent of time and space and historical development" and which only needs be discovered in order to "conquer the world by its own power," into a *science*, could take place only by connecting socialist theory, on the very real basis of the existing capitalist system, with a definite class in whose very interests it is to fight for the destruction of the capitalist system and for socialism, *viz.*, the working class.

The socialist movement and the labour movement pursued parallel and separate courses before Marx. The more or less sectarian socialist trends and movements lived their own lives outside of the working class and its daily struggles. The labour movements, the struggle of the workers against the employers, even the struggles of the workers for political rights (as for instance the Chartist movement in England), proceeded without being given socialist aims. Socialism and the working class, the socialist and the labour movement, were united for the first time by the party whose theoretical and practical leaders were Marx and Engels: by the revolutionary party of the Communists. This party was first the Communist League, whose programme was the Communist Manifesto drawn up by Marx and Engels.

The other revolutionary labour organisation called into life directly by Marx and Engels was the International Workingmen's Association, the First International, the first world party of the revolutionary proletariat. The following historical slogan in its constitution has since become the

common property of the international working class:

"The emancipation of the working class must be accomplished by the working class itself."

But the interlinking of socialist theory with the labour movement could not be consummated through revolutionary theory alone. That required also a revolutionary leader.

"Marx was a revolutionist above everything else," wrote Engels. "To participate somehow or other in the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions created by it, to participate in the liberation of the modern proletariat . . . was his real life profession. And he fought with a passion, ability and success that could be matched by few."

As a revolutionist Marx was the "most hated and most slandered man of his day." And this not only as the mortal foe of the bourgeoisie who called and organised the workers for combat. He was hated and spurned as an enemy not only because he was the leader of the Communist League, the editor of the revolutionary *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the founder of the First International, the leader of its General Council, the advisor of the socialist organisations and movements in Europe and America, the leading *publicist* of the revolutionary labour movement, the spokesman of all revolutions of his day before the forum of international public opinion: of the French, the German, the Austrian and Hungarian revolutions in 1848-49, of the French Commune in 1871, of the revolutionary movements of the Russian Narodniki in the '70's and 80's, the defender of the oppressed nations: the Poles and the Irish as



well as the Hindus and the American Negroes, but also because he fought against petty-bourgeois democrats like Mazzini, Ledru Rollin, Kinkel, etc., who in the name of the "interests of democracy" attempted to prevent the development of an independent Class Movement of the Proletariat. He was no less hated and slandered as a fighter against the world-redeeming ideas of the various socialist and anarchist sects, from Weitling and Proudhon by way of Willich, Schapper and Bakunin right to Ferdinand Lassalle, the friend of Bismarck. They all wanted to transform the world either according to their own ready-made prescriptions or to tie the working class to the tail of the ruling classes.

"The history of the International," wrote Marx, on, November 13th, 1871, to Boltke "was a continuous struggle of the General Council against the sects and amateur attempts which sought to assert themselves against the real movement of the working class within the International itself."

The *Right-opportunist, petty-bourgeois danger* (to use present-day terminology) which greatly threatened the young class-conscious labour movement from its inception, encountered his passionate ire in no lesser degree. In his famous *Critique of the Gotha Programme* he warned the followers of the Eisenach tendency of the dangers of the Lassallean dilution of the German labour movement. Together with Engels he remonstrated still more energetically when during the period of the validity of the anti-Socialist law the delivering over of the Party organ of the German Social-Democratic Party to a circle of friends consisting of "philanthropically-minded students and pro-

fessors of the upper and lower middle-classes," was contemplated.

"So the gentlemen have been forewarned," wrote Marx in 1879 to Sorge on the occasion of the emergence of this opportunist danger, and they know us sufficiently well to appreciate that here it means either *bend or break!* If they want to compromise themselves, *tant pis* (so much the worse).

"In no event will they be permitted to compromise us."

An irreconcilable revolutionist, hurling defiance at all governments, whether absolute or republican; at all bourgeois-conservatives as well as extreme democrats, all petty-bourgeois — the preachers of general fraternisation between man and man, as well as the preachers of general destruction—an inflexible revolutionist was our greatest of teachers, Karl Marx.

The fifty years that have elapsed since the death of Marx have been a period of incessant struggle *for and against Marxism*. No matter how numerous or how palpable the evidence furnished by history to corroborate the correctness of Marxism, the struggle for and against Marxism has never stopped, as this struggle is part of the great contest between two historical classes, the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat.

As these fifty years rolled by, the course of historical development not only fully and completely confirmed, in the countries of older-established capitalism, the soundness of the Marxian teaching, but it was confirmed also by *the awakening of new classes* in the East—in Japan, in India and China—which had been only partly covered by Marx's investigations and whose "historical inactivity



and sleep " were of great assistance to the bourgeoisie of the old capitalist countries in maintaining their positions against the working class in their own countries.

The historical tendency of capitalism's development, that is the ultimate passing beyond that stage of society, has moved towards its end with the iron necessity predicted of it by Marx and Engels. Capitalism, which after Marx's death had already subjugated the entire world, entered a new phase at the end of the nineteenth century, the phase of *monopoly capitalism*, of *imperialism*. Through the concentration of capital in the hands of a few cartels, trusts and syndicates, dominated by still fewer major banks; through the seizure of the sources of raw materials especially in the colonies; through *finance capital* whose international cartels have commenced the economic partition of the world among themselves, free competition was replaced by monopoly. The export of capital became the principal means of the expansion of capital. The territorial division of the world among the great imperialist powers was concluded. In one imperialist war after the other (the Spanish-American war of 1899, the Boer war of 1900-02, the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05) history was confronted with the problem of a fresh *division of the world*.

The three peculiar features of imperialism—*monopolist*, *parasitic* and *decaying* capitalism—have evoked a number of far-reaching changes in bourgeois society. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries has lost the last remnants of its progressive rôle. All its sections—though they harbour antagonisms among themselves—have become *reactionary*. The parasitism of the bour-

geoisie, enhanced through the formation of an entire section of *rentiers*, has not only strengthened *political reaction* but also corruption, which had already assumed tremendous proportions. The parasitism of the ruling class has reached a monstrous scale through the export of capital and the exploitation of the *colonies*. The blood-sucking bourgeoisie in every imperialist country has extended privileges to an upper layer of the working class, the *labour aristocracy*, which occupies its privileged position partly at the expense of the colonial peoples, partly at the expense of the native proletariat. In the Federal Council of the English Section of the First International "a vote of censure was administered to Marx because he said that the English trade union leaders were bribed." But this reprimand has been rescinded by history. The *labour aristocracy*, a bribed section of the working class, has become an international phenomenon. To the extent that the English working class as a whole lost its privileged position through the shattering of England's monopolist position on the world market, the bribed section of the *labour aristocracy* took shape in the other imperialist countries as well.

The *decay of capitalism* through the monopoly system—as well as the sharpening contradiction between the growing socialisation of labour and the capitalist method of appropriation—meant that capitalism, as Marx had predicted, was entering the stage of its death throes.

The monopoly system within the framework of an unevenly developed world capitalism placed two decisive questions upon the agenda of history: imperialist war for a division of the world and proletarian revolution for the dictatorship of the



*proletariat as the transition to socialism!*

Marxism and the class movement of the proletariat, on reaching this turning point in history, have arrived at what is a critical stage for themselves. The laws of motion underlying capitalist production discovered by Marx, and of bourgeois society corresponding to this *mode of production*, have exerted their influence on a higher plane of development. The historical fate of capitalism having entered a decisive stage, the historical destinies of Marxism have also entered a sphere marked by the embittered struggles of historical decisions.

Marx's doctrine went through its historical development in the smoke of battle, both while Marx was still alive and after his death. Before the bourgeoisie applied the *criticism of the weapon* as such, or force of arms, against the revolutionary labour movement, it endeavoured to destroy Marxism through the *weapon of criticism*. An entire caste of doctors of philosophy, university lecturers, professors and syndics representing capitalist interests and independent scholars, an entire caste of large and small-scale producers of bourgeois ideology, was formed to "kill off" Marxism. They not only "killed off" Marxism daily, weekly and monthly in their periodical and non-periodical publications, but they buried it just as often. These "Marx-killers," these economic and political weather-prophets of the bourgeoisie, applied their learning mainly against the law of the concentration of capital, the law of the pauperisation of the working class. Every reform, however small, every achievement of social policy, however petty, which was gained by the working class in severe class

struggles was celebrated as a refutation of Marxist teaching, particularly that concerning the class struggle.

The influence of bourgeois ideologies upon the working class was not only fostered *from without*, but also *from within*. In the *pre-imperialist* period of capitalism this influence was exerted mainly through the medium of the proletarianised artisans, through *newcomers* in the working class. During the period of imperialism the *labour aristocracy* became the principal intermediary through whom bourgeois influences penetrated the working class.

Marxism after the dissolution of the First and the formation of the Second International gained the *hegemony* in the struggle of the working class to bar bourgeois influences from its movement. In the comparatively "peaceful" period after the overthrow of the Paris Commune until the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the beginning of the revolutionary movements of the Eastern nations, Marxism expanded the positions it had won among the broad masses. The perfectly obvious facts of the real development of the class struggle under capitalism were far more potent than the "proofs" of the Marx-killers.

Other methods had to be applied against Marxism which was deservedly extending and strengthening its hold among the working class.

Along with the method of *Marx-killing*, the method of *Marx-adulteration* had to be resorted to, mainly within the labour movement. By this means it was hoped to create a bourgeois labour movement instead of the proletarian-revolutionary class movement of the workers.

"The dialectic of history is such," wrote



Lenin in his article entitled *The Historical Fate of Marxism*, "that the theoretical victory of Marxism forces its enemies to don Marxian garb. Internally decaying liberalism seeks a revival in the form of *socialist opportunism*."

After the death of Engels the Second International entered upon this stage of Marx-adulteration on a "wholesale" scale, entered upon an "entire stage of the undivided domination of opportunism."

Upon the structure housing the leading party of the Second International, the German Social-Democratic Party, the lately deceased Edward Bernstein openly hoisted the flag of the revision of the Marxian doctrine. In the realm of *philosophy*: against materialism, for idealism; against the "traps of Hegelian dialectics"—"back to Kant." In the realm of *economy*: against the Marxian theory of value, for its "supplementation" by the so-called theory of final utility of Boehm-Bawerk's Austrian school of economy, a theory which attempted to refute the theory of labour value. In opposition to the doctrine of the concentration of capital, a theory concerning the "indestructibility of small-scale production" and the "democratisation of capital" through joint-stock companies, was created. A theory concerning the absolute and relative amelioration in the position of the working class was counterposed to the theory concerning the absolute pauperisation of the working class. Whole libraries were written by Edward David and other revisionists "to prove" that Marx's teaching had no application to the development of agriculture. In agriculture small-scale production gains the upper hand over large-scale production—was the con-

ception of the revisionists.

The Marxist *theory of crises* was singled out for special attack by all the revisionists who maintained that capitalism through its cartels, trusts, etc., had overcome its anarchy and thereby also its periodically recurrent crises. By overcoming these crises and thus preventing the return of catastrophic mass unemployment, by dint of the increasing "social consideration of the bourgeois class," which finds its expression in the strengthening of social policy—through all this Marx's "theory of collapse" was to be disproved. It was claimed that revolution would no longer be necessary to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie; that no dictatorship of the proletariat was necessary to safeguard the transition from capitalism to socialism; that peaceful reformist work, the conquest of a parliamentary majority on the part of the Social-Democratic Parties, would assure *evolution into socialism*. Socialism was to cease to be the cause of *one class*, of the working class, and was to become the product of the peaceful "collaboration of all classes of the population." In this way socialism was to be withdrawn as an urgent actuality of the hour which had to be faced just when it had been raised as a living issue by the advent of imperialism. "The final goal means nothing to me—the movement is everything," was the motto of Edward Bernstein, the revisionist.

But the most dangerous falsification of Marx was not open revisionism, but the "defence" of Marxism by the Marxian Centre under the leadership of that driest of pedants, Karl Kautsky, Pope of the Second International. This "defence" consisted in the abandonment of what were just



the most important theoretical positions of Marxism in favour of the revisionists this being done primarily on the issue which the revisionists put metaphysically as : "*Reform or revolution.*"

Marxism was to be split into two parts : into its "revolutionary" and its "reformist" ingredients. Reform as such held an *independent significance* all its own in the theory of the Centrists : Reforms were divested of their real character of a by-product of the revolutionary struggle and set up as a goal in themselves. The first victim of the "defence of Marxism" by the Centrists was the *Marxian theory of the State*. The doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and, therefore, Marx's doctrine of revolutionary tactics, as well, was relegated by the Centrists to the attic of history as something superannuated. What Marx and Engels had written about armed uprising was passed over in silence or destroyed as so much "Blanquist deviation." Engel's introduction to Marx's *Class Struggles in France* was brazenly falsified by the representative of the Executive Committee of the German Social-Democratic Party by suppressing those passages that spoke of armed uprising. Centrism was far from being headed towards a struggle against the bourgeois influence that the revisionists allowed to seep in ; it represented, on the contrary, *conciliation* with the transformation of social democracy into a bourgeois labour party.

Revisionism and Centrism are most closely interwoven on the question of imperialism. For both, imperialism was not a *special phase* of capitalist development but a *policy* of part of the ruling class. The one openly espoused the imperialist policy of its own bourgeoisie, the other did the

same thing while making a pretence of combating imperialist policy by mouthing pacifist phrases.

The left radical tendency, headed by Rosa Luxembourg, conducted a valiant struggle against revisionism and centrism, but not consistently against the latter. She was not in accord with the conciliatory attitude of Kautsky and Bebel toward Bernstein and Vollmar. The left radicals demanded the expulsion of Bernstein from the Social-Democratic Party. But they themselves designated very important theoretical views of Marx as "erroneous" or "obsolete." They did this in the case of the law of the accumulation of capital ; in the case of the doctrine of Marx and Engels concerning the national question and the peasant question ; of their (Marx's and Engels') views concerning the rôle of the proletarian party, concerning armed uprising, the dictatorship of the proletariat, etc. It therefore could not be the tendency which continues Marxism in accordance with the new phase of the capitalist development of imperialism. It therefore was incapable also of discovering the *roots of revisionism*. For it *reformism*—and that variety of revisionism known as centrism—was not an inevitable consequence of the social composition, the social stratification, of the working class, but in large measure nothing but a theoretical or political deviation of individual theoreticians or leaders of the social-democratic parties.

This was the situation in the Western Sections of the Second International when imperialist development confronted the proletariat with two vital questions : *imperialist war and proletarian revolution—imperialism or socialism?*



The passing over of the revisionists as well as the centrists to the side of their own bourgeoisie, their attitude in favour of the imperialist war (in form openly social-chauvinist or mantled by social-pacifism), and their abominable betrayal of the cause of the working class *was conditioned by the entire preceding development of the Second International.*

The Left radicals, in accordance with their previous principles, conducted the struggle against imperialist war with courage and self-sacrifice. Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Mehring will live for ever in the history of the labour movement as courageous and valiant revolutionary fighters for the cause of the proletariat. Yet, and this was in keeping with their attitude on very important theoretical questions of Marxism, they could not break with the centrists during the war and even after the war they could do so only after a struggle, for they were not consistent supporters and continuers of the work of Marx and Engels. When the laws of motion of capitalist production and bourgeois society, laws discovered by Marx, were being "refuted" in whole or in part by the dominant tendencies in the Western parties of the Second International, it was naturally impossible to perceive that capitalism had entered a new stage in conformity with these laws. Nor could they perceive what constituted the peculiar traits of capitalism during this phase and what conclusions the proletarian parties had to draw therefrom. The perception of the imperialist phase of capitalism and of its special traits reached on the basis of Marxian dialectics and the special laws of capitalist production discovered by Marx—this historical, epoch-making perception could rise

only in the mind of a Marxist who permitted neither so-called "criticism," nor "supplementation of Marxism," nor its ossification into a lifeless dogma.

### THAT MARXIST WAS LENIN!

Only Lenin could succeed in accomplishing this epoch-making discovery: only he was the one consistent continuer of the Marxian doctrine after the death of Engels. He alone could show the right path, tell the working class how it should act in this new imperialist phase of capitalism, especially with reference to imperialist war.

He perceived reformism in its every variety, whether revisionist or centrist, as an inevitable phenomenon of capitalist society and completely exposed its social roots: the petty bourgeois sections of the proletariat which had sunk down to the working class and the sections of the proletariat that had risen to the labour aristocracy—there was its social source.

He also perceived the historical significance of reformism from its inception in whatever variety it appeared, revisionist or centrist. In 1908, in his article dedicated to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, he gave final shape to the characterisation of reformism as follows:

" . . . . It is quite natural that the petty bourgeois world outlook should again and again break into the ranks of the broad workers' parties. It is quite natural that this should be so, and it will always be so, until the climax of the proletarian revolution; for it would be a great mistake to think that the "complete" proletarianisation of the majority of the population is necessary in order to bring about such a revolution. What we now experience more often on the mental plane only—



discussions with theoretical additions to Marx what now emerges in working practice only on certain particular questions of the labour movement as tactical differences with the revisionists and splits on these grounds—the working class will have to experience to an immeasurably greater extent when the proletarian revolution makes all debatable questions acute, concentrates all the differences upon points which have most direct significance in determining the attitude of the masses and compels us, in the heat of the battle, to separate enemies from friends, and to expel bad allies in order to deliver decisive blows against the enemy.”

*Leninism*, which according to Stalin's classic definition is “Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution” was born in the struggle—in the only consistent struggle—for Marxism against the “Marx-killers” as well as against the Marx-falsifiers, the “supplementers” and “critics” of Marxism. Even *historical continuity* exists between the activity of Frederick Engels, Marx's peer as a collaborator and comrade-in-arms, and Lenin, their peer as a continuer of their work and struggle.

Frederick Engel's activity was terminated in 1895 by his death. In 1894, *Who Are the Friends of the People and How do They Struggle against Social Democracy?*, the product of young Vladimir Ulyanov, appeared illegally in Tsarist Russia in hectograph form. In this early work of Lenin's, Marxism appears in full armour, the programme of the Communist revolution stands forth in complete and bold relief in a “way”

that no one except Marx and Engels had ever presented it. In this work he took up the cudgels, not only against the special Russian form of petty bourgeois socialism, against the Narodniks, but also “against the narrow conception of Marxism . . . even among the Marxists.” Two years after the death of Engels appeared the protest by Lenin and his colleagues against Bernstein and his Russian supporters, a protest written while in Siberian exile. This protest, in contradistinction to the “defence” of Marxism by Kautsky and Co., really and consistently defended Marxism in its entirety and in every particle of its doctrine. From this first hectographed production of Lenin's until the October Revolution and until his last work, which dealt with the co-operative plan, the same consistency in the development of his original thoughts may be noticed as with Marx and Engels, and their first labours until the last words written by them.

The October Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, the construction of socialism throughout one-sixth of the globe, commenced under the leadership of Lenin and continued under the leadership of Stalin, is the fulfilment, the materialisation of Marxism in a struggle, not only against the bourgeoisie, but also against the opportunism of the Marx-falsi—which had developed into social-chauvinism, social-imperialism and social-fascism, from Bernstein, Kautsky and Trotsky to Otto Bauer, Hilferding and Vandervelde, as well as against the Right and “Left” distorters of Leninism.

The greatest historical act accomplished after the October Revolution in the course of socialist



construction, the rooting of socialist forms in agriculture resultant on the achievements of socialist industrialisation (effected through the collectivisation of the peasant farms and elaborated theoretically and practically by Stalin), is nothing more nor less than a literal materialisation of that which Marx and Engels thought and wrote concerning the transition to Communist economy. In a letter, heretofore unpublished, written by Engels to Bebel on January 20th, 1886, we read the following concerning Marx and Engels' plan of collectivisation:

"And that during the transition to Communist economy we will have to utilise collective economy as a medial stage on an extensive scale, neither Marx nor I ever doubted. Now matters must be so arranged that society, i.e., in the first place, the State, retains the ownership of the means of production, (Compare The Nationalisation of the Land, the latest decree of the Soviet Government concerning the inalienability of collective-farm land and concerning the machine and tractor stations—B. K.), and that the special interests of the collective as against society as a whole cannot become incrustated." (Compare, again, the purging of the collective farms of the kulak elements that had crept in, as the result of the efforts to sabotage grain-collections.—B. K.).

If we juxtapose the documents saved from the literary heritage of Marx and Engels and published recently—documents which were kept secret by the excellent premonition of social-democratic theoreticians like Bernstein and Kautsky—to the works of Lenin and Stalin, the fact must be acknowledged that the theoretical

and practical attitude of Lenin and Stalin on questions in which the opinion of Marx and Engels could not have been known to them completely coincides with the attitude of Marx and Engels, in many instances even *verbatim*. This is not merely a matter of the personal qualities of Lenin and Stalin which can be measured with the rod of our two old masters, but the proof that the Bolshevism of Lenin and Stalin represent the only consistent continuation of the work of Marx and Engels.

Developments during the fifty years that have elapsed since Karl Marx died have not only fully and completely confirmed, upon a new stage of their development, the laws of the capitalist method of production, discovered by Marx, but especially their theory concerning the State and revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the only possible way to socialism. Not only the tremendous development of the forces of production through the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, but also—and this is especially to be noted at the threshold of the second Five-Year Plan—the struggle to train the toilers to become conscious builders of classless society confirm completely what Marx and Engels set forth in their "German Ideology," published recently for the first time:

"That for the mass generation of this Communist consciousness, as well as for the accomplishment of the matter itself, a mass change in man himself is necessary, which can only take place in a practical movement, in a revolution; that the revolution, therefore, is not only necessary because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but because



only in a revolution can the overthrowing class reach the point of ridding itself of all the old rubbish and of becoming capable of founding a new society."

In the struggle between the two systems—capitalism and socialism—the banners of the proletariat, which has become the ruling class, bear the proud slogan of the Communist Manifesto:

*Workers of the World, Unite!*

The leader of the proletarians of all countries, the Communist International, has it in its charter that:

"The Third Communist International, founded March, 1919, in Moscow, capital of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, declares solemnly to the entire world that it undertakes to continue and conclude the great task begun by the First International Workingmen's Association."

This pledge to complete the work of the First International of Marx and Engels is an undertaking to fulfil, to materialise Marxism, begun by the October Revolution under the leadership of Lenin, a materialisation to be accomplished by incessant, arduous and indefatigable struggle for the world dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx belongs to those who fulfil his teaching, who struggle for the materialisation of Marxism—to the Leninists.

Marx belongs to us!

To us, the Communist International and the Young Communist International!

III.

Many of you will consider we are being too fervent in stressing so sharply the fact that Marx

belongs to us.

Who besides Communists lays claim to Marx to-day?

Was it not Mr. Emile Vandervelde, chairman of the Second International and repeatedly Minister of His Majesty the King of Belgium, who recently publicly repudiated Marxism?

He did this by replying to a new "Marx-killing" by Lord Melchett, chairman of the English Chemical Trust, better known as Sir Alfred Mond, partner to the English reformist trade-union leaders in founding so-called *Mondism*, the English variety of the theory of industrial peace. This noble lord said about seven years ago and reprinted in his book, entitled *Industry and Politics*:

"If there is one thing in the world which is dead in this country it is socialism. It was buried at Liverpool, buried deep, deep down. You have only to read Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech to all. And why? Because every practical man knows, and every man who has had the responsibility of Government in this country, knows perfectly well in his heart, whatever he may in theory think about socialism or speak about it, you cannot apply the system."

To this Marx-killing the chairman of the Second International replied as follows:

"Socialism and Marxism are not to be taken as synonymous. . . . It would give the conception of socialism a peculiarly narrow construction if this conception were to be completely identified with Marxism."

The chairman of the Second International had nothing else to do but feign that he was abandon-



ing the "sinking ship" of Marxism, which all his life he had boarded perhaps once and then only as a stowaway.

Was it not Karl Renner, one of the most prominent theoreticians of Austro-Marxism and former Chancellor, who, on the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ferdinand Lassalle—whose doctrine concerning the State became the social-traitors' theoretical point of departure—stored away Marxism for good when he wrote:

"Marx was right when figuring in centuries, but when figuring in the decades in which we live, Lassalle was right in every particular."

Both statements appeared in the theoretical magazine of the German Social-Democracy, edited by Dr. Rudolf Hilferding.

Another star of Belgian Social-Democracy, Henrik de Man, highly esteemed as a theoretician in the entire Second International, declared in his book *On the Psychology of Socialism* that "the vanquishing of Marxism," "the liberation from Marxism" were the result of his work. To him this vanquishing of Marxism is "not only a question of knowledge, but also of conscience" (German: "Wissen" and "Gewissen"). He does not any longer want to support the lie—he writes this himself—that he is a Marxist as his party comrades do; he does not want to participate in the hypocrisy that is being practised in Germany where, in his judgment:

"Properly speaking Marxism no longer has any internal points of contact whatever . . . with the trade union and the co-operative movement, at least not in the sense that it directs their activity . . . It only continues to play a rôle in the political activity of the Social-

Democratic Party, which is recognised by the party as useful (i.e., for the purpose of "Left" manoeuvres.—B. K.). Social-Democracy is constrained to conduct an opportunist policy of coalition and support of the State, which, while not in reason, yet in sentiment contradicts the prior keynote of irreconcilable class struggle to which it owes its origin; in consequence of which it is particularly interested in emphasising the inner stability of this policy by symbolising its attachment to the Marxian tradition . . . It (i.e., Marxism.—B. K.) can no longer guide the policy of the party because this policy rests upon actual pre-conditions, which contradict those out of which the doctrine once arose. Of course, Marxism can still supply slogans for agitational purposes, slogans which, in the main, bridge the gap between the political tradition of yesterday and the policy of to-day."

This is the judgment of a leading social-democrat, not only concerning Marxism in general but also concerning the *relation between social-democracy and Marxism*.

In his latest book on *Capitalism and Socialism After the World War* (Rationalisation—Mistaken Rationalisation) (Fehlrationalisierung), Otto Bauer "dethrones" the Marxian theory of price to replace it by a brand new "theory" of Marshall, Moor and other American investigators of business conditions and manufacturers of ideology for Dollar Imperialism:

"The significance of these investigations is just as great for the development of the theory of price," wrote Otto Bauer, commenting on the work of these American economists.



"Heretofore the function of demand was no more than a mathematical symbol of the given demand situation which the price theory utilised to represent schematically the dependence of the market price upon the given demand situation. Only when definite functions for individual commodities, calculated on the basis of statistical data, take the place of the symbolic functions do we attain an inductive-statistical price theory."

The price theory of Marxism, based upon the doctrine of value promulgated by Marx and Engels, is therefore declared *inadequate* by Otto Bauer and is "supplemented" by a vulgar-economic theory. Naturally, the only effect achieved thereby is a new "refutation" of one of the most fundamental precepts of Marxism.

And was it not Mr. Tarnow, a prominent leader of the A.D.G.B. (General German Trade-Union Federation) and of the German Social-Democratic Party who eliminated Marx altogether in his book *Why be Poor?* He actually accomplished the feat of raising Henry Ford, the auto king, to the rank of theoretician of the reformist trade-union movement, in order to prove that socialism was unnecessary, as poverty could be abolished forever under capitalism by using Ford's method. Tarnow wrote:

"Henry Ford's book, *My Life and Work*, is certainly the most revolutionary writing of all economic literature to date."

Thus in the reformist trade-union movement Marx's *Capital*—written *against* capital—had to yield place in revolutionary world literature to make room for Henry Ford's book—written *for* capital.

While Otto Bauer repudiates Marx's theory of price, Rudolf Hilferding, who before the war was engaged in revising Marx's money theory, cannot now reconcile himself to Marxism as applied to the agrarian question. On the occasion of the agrarian debate in the German Social-Democratic Party (1927) he declared in his *Theoretical Observations on the Agrarian Question* that:

"... the dispute concerning the preponderance between large and small-scale production in agriculture continues *undecided* to this day ...". That on the one hand; and on the other he says that: "precisely the application of Marx's method" shows "that the law of concentration (*i.e.*, the law concerning the concentration of capital and of enterprises) does not apply to agriculture."

Disproving Marxism "in instalments" could not satisfy Prof. Erik Nölting, a social-democrat and one of the most typical theoreticians of social-fascism. In one of his discourses entitled *What does Marxism mean to us to-day?* (reported in the *Frankfurter Volksstimme* of January 21st, 1928), he attempted to guillotine Marxism altogether.

He recapitulated his refutation of Marxism in ten points from which we can cull only a few excerpts:

1. Since Marx, capitalist society has changed in its basic structure . . . . The doctrine of crises is itself no longer tenable, as the crises of to-day have their origin in shocks that have arisen outside the process of production. . . .

2. As trade unions were formed, the labour



market changed. . . . Marx taught that the worker must necessarily become impoverished, must sink lower and lower . . . that his liberation would grow out of his destitution. But the most elevated sections are the basic troops of socialism. . . . Psychologically the theory of pauperisation is erroneous.

3. The peasant question remains entirely unsolved. Marx was a typical city dweller, an exile in flight. We assumed with him that the peasantry would travel the same path of concentration as the capitalists. . . . That is a very grave misapprehension, etc.

4. The problem of socialisation as Marx saw it is too narrow. In one place he wants social justice, then he wants the transfer of the means of production. . . . The socialisation proposal of Marx also lacks the concrete indication as to whom the means of production are to be transferred. This we missed in the revolution.

5. The cultural question found no solution in orthodox Marxism. . . . Marxism says that the proletarian stands in opposition to the bourgeois, hence his culture also stands in opposition to bourgeois culture. Cultures did not grow out of the economic structure, however much they were modified by it. The higher the proletarian rises the more the differences disappear. . . .

6. International questions also found no exhaustive solution in Marxism. The placard-like formula: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" screens the actually existing differences between the workers of the individual nations. . . .

7. The democratic parliamentary state is a fact which can afford the proletariat the possibility of improving its position. You must utilise this and not deny the State in the old Marxist sense. . . . Marx is of the opinion that the State is to be destroyed. But we see that it will only pass from one hand to the other. It is neither a purely bourgeois nor a purely proletarian matter. In essence it is rather a matter of officials. (Exactly the programme of the presidential government of von Papen and von Schleicher.—B. K.).

8. The fact that there is an intermediate link between capitalism and socialism overcomes the Marxist conception of an explosive conversion from capitalism to socialism. This transitional phase finds threefold expression: (a) politically by coalition governments (Kautsky is the father of this idea.—B. K.); (b) economically by industrial democracy (Hilferding is the father of this idea.—B. K.); (c) socially through labour legislation (the paternity of this idea is difficult to establish, the entire international trade-union bureaucracy share the responsibility.—B. K.).

9. Why the concept of determinism is superfluous. Marxism is imbued with the belief that socialism must grow out of capitalism. Every movement seeks to base its *raison d'être* on hope in the determinism of its thesis.

Enough of this piffle of the most vulgar bourgeois science, which nevertheless, has one advantage in Prof. Nölting's recapitulation, viz., that it contains almost everything that the leading theoreticians of the Second International have uttered at various times in refutation of Marxism.



Marx passed judgment on such a garbled apology of capitalism, when in his preface to the first volume of *Capital* he wrote concerning these theoreticians that for them it is not a question

"Whether this or that theorem is true but whether it is useful or harmful, convenient or inconvenient for capitalism, whether allowed or not allowed by the police."

We could multiply *ad infinitum* such and similar declarations of social-democratic theoreticians and practitioners, in which Marx is "refuted," and forever "dethroned." They were especially numerous during the period of the relative stabilisation of capitalism when it seemed to them that Hilferding and Naphtali's "organised capitalism" had for ever rendered "unreal" the "irksome" law of capitalist production discovered by Marx and Engels. In the days of "prosperity," when it seemed to the social-democratic leaders that imperialism had overcome its post-war crisis, Marxism was thrown overboard as ballast by all parties of the Second International. Even its utilisation as a shibboleth to placate those who wanted to erect a bridge "between the past and the present of social-democracy" was reduced to a minimum.

But the period of shocks and jolts for industry and the end of relative stabilisation brought about by the accentuation of the world economic crisis in the capitalist countries, together with the simultaneous victorious advance of socialist construction in the Soviet Union (which it was impossible to conceal from the necessitous masses of the capitalist countries), the revolutionary upswing and the growing influx of the masses into the Communist Parties caused other winds to

prevail. The practical as well as the theoretical victories of Marxism have compelled the enemies of Marxism to re-dress themselves in Marxian garb after all their seasonal theories have been torn to tatters.

After the election victory of the Communist Party of Germany on November 7th, two Marxian parties suddenly appeared in Germany on the horizon of the Vienna *Arbeiterzeitung*.

"Relatively the share of votes obtained by the *two Marxian Parties* has increased," wrote Mr. Otto Bauer or one of his lieutenants after the Reichstag elections in November, putting a pleasant face on an unpleasant situation.

The Berlin organ of the Social-Democratic Party, the *Vorwärts*, reprinted with special emphasis this new discovery of Otto Bauer's concerning the "two Marxist parties."

Mr. Vandervelde who, after the miners' strike in Borinage, had to record the fact that the reformistically organised Belgian workers were disinclined to follow the coalition policy of his party, wants to convince them in the name of "Marxism" that they ought to form a united front with the clericals instead of with the Communists. On the occasion of the last governmental crisis in Belgium he wrote in *Le Peuple* on December 11th:

"I am an *old Marxist*. I believe in the primacy of the economic factors. I am decidedly inimical to any reversion to political formulas that would push anti-clericalism again into the foreground. I would deprecate with all the power within me every action whose aim it would be to divide the working class still more against itself, by undertaking any attack



whatever upon freedom of conscience and of instruction."

"Religion is opium for the people," wrote Marx. The chairman of the Second International is ready to falsely label himself an "old Marxist," so that the workers may believe him when he advocates a coalition with the dispensers of this opium.

The Social-Democrats, still Marxists only by the grace of Hitler, go so far that, at their party congress in Germany which is being called during the period of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, Marx actually figures on their congress agenda. Rudolf Hilferding, author of *Finance Capital* and most devoted servant and avid beneficiary of finance capital, will make the introductory report at the party congress on "Marx and the Present Day." So it comes that Marxists by the grace of Hitler now lay "voluntary" claim to Marx.

We would like to recommend two slogans for the streamers that will decorate the congress hall when Hilferding delivers his address. Even without the use of clubs or beer jugs these two slogans would of themselves denote a battle in the meeting hall yet might be most appropriate on this occasion when Hilferding holds forth on Marx.

One of these slogans is by Marx himself:—  
"*I am the mortal enemy of capitalism.*"

The promulgator of the other slogan was not a simple revolutionist like Marx; he demands that his honorary titles be enumerated: Ex-Chairman of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, Member of the Council of People's Commissars in November, 1918, and First President of the

German Republic. I refer to Friedrich Ebert. The watchword that is traceable to him and dates back to those same days of the November revolution reads:

"*I hate revolution like poison.*"

I entertain no hopes that this proposal of mine—although it would be a correct introduction to Hilferding's discourse on "Marx and the Present Day"—will be accepted. On the contrary, I think it is highly probable that Hilferding will solve this "slight discrepancy between the conceptions of Marx and Ebert in his own fashion—which savours of Austro-Marxism—as follows:

"Well, you see, it's a matter of taste; this one hates capitalism, and that one revolution, but both were enamoured with Socialism!"

I think it is quite improbable that in his discourse Hilferding will deal with all questions that bear on his theme—especially such *current topics* as the development of social-democracy into social-fascism, its relation to fascism; the responsibility of the social democrats and the reformist trade unions for the lowering of the working-class standard of living; for the unemployment of millions.

These questions are of the utmost importance to the present-day labour movement. A correct reply to them can be made only by consulting Marx. This is the more necessary because many social-democratic workers feel offended if one speaks about their party as a social-fascist party and opine—*quite in good faith*—that the social-democratic party *has* retained something of Marxism. For this reason it is necessary to counterpose at least two important questions of the day; the relation of the social-democrats and



the fascists to the bourgeois State, and the wage policy of social-democracy and fascism, to the Marxist conception of the State and wage policy.

Let us next consider whether the *social-democratic conception of the State* which lies at the bottom of the "proposals for a united front," calling, as they do, upon the workers not only of Germany but of the entire world, to defend the Weimar Republic—whether this conception of the State, the expression of which is the Weimar Constitution, has anything in common with Marxism and whether there is any *essential* difference, any difference in principle, between it and the fascist conception of the State.

It is well known that Marxism represents the idea that the bourgeois State, and therefore the Weimar Republic also, is "the expression of the irreconcilability of class-contradictions," of the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between capitalist and worker. The Weimar Constitution, its construction, cost the lives of tens of thousands of German proletarians, of their best leaders: *Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Jogiches* and others who were murdered by the myrmidons of Ebert, Noske and Wels in order to produce this Weimar Constitution with its Article 165 which lays it down that:—

"Workers and employees are to collaborate with the *entrepreneurs on an equal basis* in the regulation of the conditions of work and wages, as well as in the entire economic development of the *productive forces*."

We see that this sentence in the Weimar Constitution, which was fought out in the *democratic counter-revolution against the proletarian revolution*, which the German worker is to defend

according to the "proposals for a united front" made by Breitscheid, Künstler, Otto Bauer, etc., has nothing in common with the Marxist conception of the "irreconcilability of class contradictions."

But this sentence in the Weimar Constitution corresponds so much the more—both in meaning and language—to the conception of the State entertained by the fascists.

Mussolini gives utterance to this principle upon which the social-democrats harp so much as his own principle in the following modest words:

"We have incorporated all forces of production in the State. Labour and capital have *equal rights and equal duties*; they must work together, their conflicts being adjusted by recourse to law and the courts."

And the fascist constitutional charter in Italy, the "Carta del Lavoro" (Charter of Labour) contains the following article, corresponding to Article 165 of the Weimar Constitution:

"The trades corporations recognised by law guarantee equality *before the law* as between employers and employees. They maintain the discipline of *production* and promote its *perfection*."

Turati, the former General Secretary of the Fascist Party of Italy, could point with pride to its theories of communes expounded in the "Carta del Lavoro":

"The juridical recognition of the syndicates as organisations of public law, which are *authorised to represent all productive forces of the country* (the entrepreneurs and the workers by hand and brain), forms the *basic principle of the Fascist State*."



This basic principle of fascism appears as follows in "socialist" garb in Hilferding's speech at the Kiel Party Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party in 1927:

"It is socialist principle precisely to consider the direction of enterprises and economy as the *affair of society*, and society has no agency through which it can act consciously *other than the State*."

There is no need to dwell further on the fact that by this agency of society Hilferding understands not the *proletarian* but the *bourgeois* State. Hilferding would, of course, have preferred to see himself and his party at the helm of this bourgeois State, but—as Bernstein opined—when proletarian or fascist dictatorship is the only alternative, he, as a social-democrat, chooses the fascist dictatorship.

The class content of the two conceptions of the State—the fascist and the social-fascist—is *the same*: the maintenance and defence of capitalist private property against proletarian revolution. The one, the social-fascist method, calls itself "*industrial democracy*"; the other, the fascist, a "*co-operative system*." There are *differences* in the application of methods, but there are *no differences in principle*. Cogent proof of this is the fact that Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution of the German bourgeoisie safeguards the "*legal*" possibility of passing—constitutionally—from the democratic to the fascist method of bourgeois dictatorship. Also the class forces which to-day are arrayed against the proletarian revolution in Germany, mainly through openly fascist methods, differ in no essential respect from the alignment at the time the bourgeois

counter-revolution fought with democratic methods for the consummation of the Weimar Constitution. The only difference consists in this: that, while in 1918-19 the forces which to-day are carrying out the fascisation of Germany, pushed the social-democracy to the fore as the standard-bearer of the counter-revolution, they now keep it in the background.

In the struggle against the proletarian revolution, social-democracy had to settle completely with the Marxian concept of the State. By doing this, and by proclaiming to the masses that followed them the exact opposite in word and speech of what constitutes *the essence* of Marx's conception of the State—that "*political power in the proper sense of the expression is the organised power of a class for the oppression of another class*"—it not only disarmed these masses but created the ideological and even the constitutional basis for the fascisation of Germany.

Even if there be *differences* in the methods employed by the Brüning, Papen and Schleicher governments—respectively, the *policy of toleration* adopted by the social-democrats towards all three governments means only *one* thing. They tolerate what they *prepared*, what they *created*, by preventing the proletariat from seizing political power, by preventing the proletariat from establishing its class dictatorship. Therefore the standpoint of the social-democrats is the *exact opposite* of Marxism also in this most important problem of the day.

But let us throw the light of Marxism not only upon the *political* but also upon the *trade union* activity of the social-democrats of the present



day, especially the wage policy of the reformist trade unions.

The wage policy of all trade unions which are not to be designated as yellow but as organs of the class struggle, as organs for the defence of the daily interests of the working class—not to mention the struggle for the abolition of the wage system—was based upon the theory of Marx, according to which

“The general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise the average normal wage but to lower it, i.e., to shift the value of labour more or less to its minimum” (Marx: *Value, Price and Profit*).

Tarnow, the German trade union leader, joins issue with Marx here, giving it as his opinion that:

“The individual entrepreneur may figure now as before, that lowering wages can only be to his advantage. But for the entrepreneurs as a whole, this manipulation can no longer be practised without doing injury to the interests of capital and profit of the *entrepreneurs* themselves.”

Marx was of the opinion that the workers must wage a struggle against the capitalists, varying in form, but *persistent*.

“The determination of the actual degree (i.e., the degree of exploitation) is ascertained by the incessant struggle between capital and labour; the capitalist constantly tries to force down wages to their physically lowest and to draw out the working day to the physically longest, while the worker constantly exerts pressure in the opposite direction. The matter is solved by the question of the relative forces

of the participants in the struggle” (*Value, Price and Profit*),—such is the other thesis upon which the Marxian trade union policy is founded.

Messrs. Nölting, whose text book *Introduction to Theoretical Economy* is considered a semi-official publication of the A.D.G.B., entertain a different opinion:

“The formation of wages”—we read in this social-democratic text book—“is beyond the reach of strikes and the arbitrary will of parties. Every attempt to influence wages collapses by reason of its internal impossibility . . . . trade union wage policy, especially of the organisation and the carrying through of wage strikes is a fruitless and fateful illusion; laws can not be abrogated by *putsches*. A revolution against wages would be as nonsensical as a revolution against the law of gravitation.”

It is difficult to imagine that anything in the works of the social-democratic theoreticians could possibly exhibit more open enmity against Marxism. None the less the following choice morsel comes from the pen of Naphtali, whom Tarnow celebrated as the “Marx-substitute” of the reformist trade unions:

“To-day relations have changed essentially,” this great discovery announces. “Legal relationships are being established between entrepreneurs and worker. To-day we can no longer speak in general of exploitation of the workers by their employers.”

These “refutations” of Marxism are the principles which form the basis of the policy of the A.D.G.B. This was the basis of its attitude on



the question of capitalist rationalisation, when word was passed round that the "organisation" of capitalism was to be advanced at the expense of the working class by means of capitalist rationalisation. Everything that vulgar economy could invent was set up by the German trade union leaders in opposition to Marxism, was set in motion by the theoreticians of the German reformist trade unions to have the workers believe that what was being done under capitalism was in defence of their interests, actually promoted the realisation of their interests, much better than could be done by a socialism after the model of a "certain Marx." *Die Arbeit*, theoretical organ of the German trade unions, wrote at the time:

"Every step in rationalisation is a lap on the way to the return to consumption economy, of course, big capitalist in form, but without big-capitalist spirit, and is consequently a big lump of socialisation. Thus a century-old dream is coming true."

Every word of which is so much bosh and nonsense! None the less, this omnium-gatherum of idiocies was the theoretical basis upon which the reformist trade union members were "voluntarily" subjected by their leaders to capitalist wage pressure in the halcyon days of capitalist rationalisation.

Time, however, brought changes in trade union tactics and a newer refutation of Marxism. Rationalisation could not even adduce the semblance of proof that the laws of capitalist production—discovered by Marx—had lost their validity. The "organisation" of capitalism could not master the crisis even with the aid of capitalist rationalisation. The theory according

to which capitalism is interested in high wages was thus disproved. It was not the "individual entrepreneur" but the bourgeois State, the agent of the capitalist class or to use Tarnow's terminology—"of the entrepreneurs as a whole" which led the offensive against the wages of the working class. The industrial reserve army, the host of unemployed, grew to monstrous proportions during the crisis. Otto Bauer was immediately on the spot when a defence of social-fascist practice was to be "*theorised*"—the practice of the reformist trade unions which, by supporting the pressure upon wages, and because of the immense increase in unemployment, pressed the workers (by supporting capitalist rationalisation), close to the border line of barbarism or even into barbarism itself. The new descriptive word of social-democracy for the defence of capitalist rationalisation was coined by Otto Bauer and is denominated "*mistaken rationalisation*."

The same Tarnow who conducted the chorus of the German trade union bureaucrats when they sang the praises of capitalist rationalisation had to admit publicly that "precipitate and over-zealous rationalisation was one of the main causes of mass unemployment."

As the crisis sharpened the workers offered resistance to the capitalist offensive.

Marx's theory of trade union wage policy says clearly on this point that the working class should "utilise any occasional possibilities for temporary improvements . . . . If it were to yield in cowardly fashion in its daily conflicts with Capital, it would most assuredly deprive itself of the capacity to undertake any major



movement."

But the question was precisely this: that the working class was to be restrained from utilising capitalism's critical state due to the crisis, restrained from these "major movements," i.e., from the proletarian revolution, from the struggle for socialism. That is why the entire social-democracy—supported by all sorts of renegades—proclaimed the theory: "No wage struggles, no strikes, during the crisis!"

The strike is, of course, far from being a revolution, but to underestimate the revolutionary significance of strikes is anything but Marxism. Both the social-democrats and the reformist trade union leaders correctly appraised the revolutionary significance of strikes—especially in times of crises—(more correctly than many Communists who do not understand the revolutionary significance of partial demands and partial struggles), by the supreme efforts they made, and are making, to hold the workers back from strikes in order thereby to be able to defend capitalism against proletarian revolution.

That is why Tarnow, the arch-reformist, advanced exactly the opposite kind of tactics against the trade-union tactics advocated by Marxism. In his notorious Königsberg discourse on the world economic crisis—delivered at a time when wage cuts were being handed out at high-pressure speed—Tarnow raised strike-breaking, instead of reforms and minor alleviations, to the rank of a theory.

"The crisis should not be regarded from the standpoint of the working class. The crisis must be tided over within the framework of capitalist economy by the sacrifices of the

working class necessary for that purpose."

Now, whereas the trade-union theory and practice of social-democracy is the direct opposite of Marxian trade-union theory and practice, this theory of strike-breaking, enunciated by the social-fascists has all the traits in common with the fascist point of view as to the relation of the working class to the crisis and to wage movements. Small wonder, then, that while Tarnow was delivering himself of these astonishingly self-revealing sentiments, Hitler's personal press organ, the *Völkische Beobachter* was actually printing its stand on the matter in these words:

"If in this situation the economic demands of Germany's employees are examined from the point of view of right, it will be evident at first blush that reason is against them because the entire economic scheme as such is on the verge of collapse."

Both declarations date back to November, 1930—Tarnow's as well as that of Hitler's own paper.

Quite true, there have been few historical injustices to match the case of social-democracy which stands accused of Marxism for no reason whatever by its twin brother, fascism. The economic theory of social-fascism, the principles of which form the basis of the wage policy and the entire practice of the reformist trade unions, is as far distant from Marxism as it is close to the economic "theory" of national fascism.

The point of departure taken by the Marxist theory is that surplus value, which the employer appropriates in its entirety at the expense of the worker, has its origin in the process of production. From this fact follows the irreconcilable contradiction between the employer and the em-



ployee, the class contradiction between capitalist and wage worker. The point of departure of all vulgar economy, also of the economic "theory" of fascism is, on the contrary, the *process of exchange*. Profit springs not from the production of commodities but from their exchange.

But, according to the theories of both the fascists and social-fascists, harmony prevails in the process of production as between the interests of the capitalists and the wage workers.

This the programme of the N.S.D.A.P. (National Socialist Labour Party of Germany), expresses less scientifically than clearly by stating in its tenth paragraph:

"It must be the first duty of every citizen to do mental or physical work. The activity of the individual may not infringe upon the interests of the community, but must be pursued *within the framework of the entire body politic and must accrue to the advantage of all.*"

Alfred Braunthal, one of the best-known economic theoreticians of social-democracy, propounds a theory in opposition to Marxism which is scientifically formulated, but whose content corresponds fully to the fascist programme. This theory is set forth in his *Present-Day Economy and its Laws*, and is intended for use as a text book. There this disciple of Otto Bauer says:

"The theory of productivity, viewed from the angle of wages, doubtless has practical significance and can be justified in one point, for the following law accords with it: Any rise in wages finds an absolute limit in the productivity of labour. And vice versa: the greater the productivity, the higher wages can, under certain circumstances, rise. In this respect the

*theory of productivity is undoubtedly superior to the Marxist theory.*"

It is "superior" because it represents the interests of the capitalists by seeking to persuade the workers that an increase in the productivity of labour occurs "in the interests of the community" and "within the framework of the entire body politic and must accrue to the advantage of all"—to use the words of the fascist programme.

Braunthal's theory of wages strikes a different tune. There we are informed that:

"Of course not more can be divided than has been produced, and the more there is being produced, the more we have at our disposal for distribution. Therefore the worker is undoubtedly interested in the greatest possible increase in production. . . ." (Of course, everything Braunthal says has reference to the capitalist method of production.—B. K.).

While Braunthal bases the social-fascist theory of wages solely upon the harmony of interests between worker and employer in the capitalist process of production, Kautsky also found a different "reason" whereby the economic as well as the political struggle of the wage workers against the capitalists can be regarded as the fascists regard it, namely, as an infringement upon the "interests of the community." In his preface to the popular edition of the second volume of *Capital*, Kautsky distorted this great work of Marx's *inter alia* by the following sentence:

"In the process of circulation phenomena arise which are of the greatest moment for the weal and woe of the workers and which do not



lose in weight by the fact that here *workers and capitalists* have identical interests up to a certain degree."

"Identical interests" between workers and capitalists in the *process of production* as well as in the *process of circulation*. What else is there left? Against whom is the social-democratic worker to fight in the opinion of his theoreticians, his political and trade union leaders?

Nothing else remains but to fight against the workers who do not recognise these "identical interests between workers and capitalists," against the Communists, against the revolutionary proletarians who adhere to the Marxian doctrine—that the contradictions between Capital and Labour, bourgeoisie and proletariat, are not identical but irreconcilable.

So what does it mean when now a few social-democratic leaders like Otto Bauer, Vandervelde and company, in their immediate propinquity to fascism, suddenly make the discovery, under the blows of the crisis and the revolutionary upsurge, that somewhere in some country there are "two Marxian parties"—perhaps also two Marxian labour internationals? What significance attaches to this discovery after Kautsky's well-known statement that if what is going on in the Soviet Union—and what we all want to materialise throughout the world—is Marxism then his life had been in vain?

This discovery is nothing more or less than an attempt to parry the *main blow* of the revolutionary proletariat which, in the struggle for socialism, must necessarily be directed against the internal foe of the proletariat, against the social-democracy. The Otto Bauers,

"the people who," as Marx and Engels wrote concerning such types in the labour movement, "under the guise of incessant hustle and bustle, not only do nothing themselves, but even endeavour to hinder others so that nothing but idle chatter results . . . these self-same people who see a reaction (which they help into the saddle.—B. K.), and then are perfectly astonished to find themselves in an *impasse* where neither resistance nor flight avail, the same people who want to cram history into their narrow philistine horizon and whom history passes by each time without taking note of them,"

these people, caught in a deadlock, now write concerning the unity which they have split. They vociferate about the defence of the interests of the workers whom they have sold and sell every day of the year. They inveigh against the "nonsense of the Communists" who direct their main blow against the newly-discovered "Marxian party." All their clamour about unity is because they know that in the difficult times of this crisis, of preparation for imperialist war, of military intervention against the Soviet Union, the proletariat presses for *unity of action*.

The sort of united front the social-democrats, who raise the hue and cry against the Communists, want is exemplified by the conference of the leaders of the national committee of German youth organisations which met on November 26th at which all tendencies were represented, social-democrats as well as national-socialists, with the sole exception of the Communist youth. This conference, which had "Youth in the Struggle for Germany" on its agenda, is reported in the



*Gewerkschaftszeitung* (Trade Union Paper), organ of the A.D.G.B., in an article abounding in panegyrics, as stating that:

"For the trade unions it was interesting to see that among the numerous groups represented at the conference of the Reich committee of the German youth organisations none could be found to sponsor a policy of *laissez-faire*. It is also noteworthy that in the concluding remarks by Prof. Flitner, as well as in various Press comments, the question was raised whether it was not time for the leaders of the youth organisations to endeavour to take a common and positive stand on concrete questions of the day."

Naturally, the organ of the A.D.G.B. is in favour of a "common and positive stand on concrete questions of the day" between the social-democratic and the fascist youth. For where there is no essential difference of opinion in the main question of to-day: defence of capitalism or the shattering of capitalism, such a common attitude is not at all difficult to maintain.

There have been cases where the social-democrats have succeeded—in the interests of capitalism—in perverting the pressure of the proletariat for unity of action into a unity farce. There are still many proletarians, I am certain, who—under the influence of social-democracy and the reformist trade unions—still fail to differentiate between unity of action in the class struggle, and the unity farce that serves the interests of the bourgeoisie.

In an unpublished letter of Engels' we find a splendid reply to Otto Bauer's hypocritical jeremiads concerning the "nonsense of the Com-

munists" who direct the main blow against the social-democrats, who want to realise the united front of the Communist and social-democratic, of the organised and the unorganised workers, but who are disinclined to enter into a "united front" with the misleaders of the social-democratic workers—with the leaders of the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals and their sections, whose bankrupt policy was characterised as follows by the *Arbeiter Zeitung* of October 9th, 1932:

"The German workers have sacrificed themselves for the State, have again and again placed their own interests after those of the State. The German bourgeoisie is thankful to them for this—through Hitler and Papen." In this letter from Engels to Bebel, dated January 20th, 1886, we find the following:

"In France the long-expected split has become a fact. The original rapprochement between Guesde and Lafargue, and Melon and Brousse could not be avoided, I suppose, on founding the party, but neither Marx nor I ever laboured under any illusions about the fact that this could not endure. The point in dispute is purely one of principle: whether the struggle is to be conducted as a class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, or is it to be permitted in good opportunist fashion (or to translate it into socialist language—possibilist fashion) to drop the class character of the movement and the programme wherever more votes, more followers, can be gained by doing so. . . . The development of the proletariat is everywhere the result of internal struggles, and France, which now is forming a



Workers' Party for the first time, is no exception. We in Germany are beyond the first phase of the internal struggle. Other struggles are still ahead of us. Unity is all right as long as it lasts, but some things take precedence over unity. And when one has fought all one's life more than anyone else against self-styled socialists, as Marx and I have done (for the bourgeoisie we tackled only as a class and almost never engaged in single combat with the bourgeois) one cannot lose any tears over the fact that the inevitable struggle has broken out."

This is the corroboratory judgment of Marx and Engels concerning the theory that the main blow of the revolutionary masses in the struggle against the main enemy, the bourgeoisie—must be directed against social-democracy. This is the answer Marx and Engels have for political bankrupts who desire to manœuvre their way out of the deadlock at the expense of the workers they have betrayed. This is the keynote for our activities to effect a real united front of the working class, a united front from below, in the daily struggles which must be led on to the decisive struggles for power.

#### IV.

The insurrection of the forces of production against private property in the means of production, against the capitalist production relationships which are the life springs of the bourgeoisie and its domination, has won greater vigour by the economically and politically decisive fact that the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics exists and is victorious, while the capitalist world has approached the point where the dynamiting of

the capitalist relations of production commences. Never before has the bourgeoisie proved itself so clearly a "superfluous class" as now. In its own countries it contemplates the crisis with despair as it breaks out with ever-renewed fury. It founds its domination more and more upon open terror against its wage slaves, whose millions lack the absolute minimum of existence.

But in the country where *Socialism has become a fact*, in the Soviet Union, it is daily proven that the working class, freed from its exploiters and oppressors, now its own master and ruling in its own right in the Soviets, develops the socialised forces of production at a tempo that staggers imagination, while at the same time appropriating socially the social product of labour. By abolishing the conditions of life under which it lived in bourgeois society, it abolishes "all the inhuman conditions of life" that capitalism has created: no unemployment, abolition of the slavery of woman, abolition of the oppression of more than a hundred nationalities. The general crisis of the capitalist system means also a crisis for the *material power* of society, the power of the ruling class, especially in view of the simultaneous triumphal march of socialism in the Soviet Union. This crisis for the material power evokes at the same time a crisis of the ruling *intellectual power*, of the prevailing bourgeois ideology.

The capitalist system which cannot give bread nor work to tens of millions of its wage slaves can also no longer cover their intellectual needs with its ideologies, not even with "anti-capitalist ideology," can no longer constantly satisfy them. The period of the intensification of



the general economic crisis is at the same time a period of crisis of all bourgeois ideologies which also figure as a means whereby the bourgeoisie may keep exploited and oppressed masses in check. The hunger of the masses, especially of the millions of young workers whose "graduation to life" takes place at a time of severest deprivations, of unemployment and terror, demands not only work and bread, but also a *world outlook*. The period of the general crisis has become the period of "grave doubts" on the part of the bourgeoisie. Words like dislocation, disintegration, internecine struggle, cataclysm, ruin and chaos are now in very common usage not only in the sphere of science but also of ideology.

"What is the point at issue?" queries someone active in fascist circles who arrogates to himself the rôle of ideologist of *young Germany*. "That is the decisive question which everyone who thinks at all must ponder, which gives him no peace and agitates his entire being. Is that which we are living through to-day the result and the aim of a development which has devoured untold sacrifice and which has shaken man from head to foot? Is this the end?"

But also in the *victor countries*, in France, in England, in the United States, the words written by *Hegel* in his *Philosophy of History* concerning the wars of Napoleon are more than applicable to their economy as well as to their ideology:

"No greater victories have ever been gained, no more genial moves have ever been made; but likewise the *impotence of victory* never appeared in a more striking light."

The nationalism rampant in the countries of

victor and vanquished alike is an *expression of the impotence* that has seized the world after the repartition of the world by the Versailles Peace Treaty and the Washington Convention had tenfold increased the number of potential starting-points of war to-day. On the other hand, it is also the consequence of the impotence of the bourgeoisie in the province of home policy, an expression of the fact, that as a result of the crisis, it feels itself more and more constricted in the application of its ideology of social reforms and is constrained to have recourse almost exclusively to what is the sheerest national damagogy.

Pacifism—that falsification of the honest will of the workers to peace, first omen of instinctive protest against imperialist war and of the awareness of a reactionary character in the clandestine preparations of imperialist war and military intervention against the Soviet Union is undergoing a profound crisis. The bourgeoisie becomes less and less capable of concealing the fact that the cause of war lies in imperialist capitalism itself; that *capitalism and war are inseparable*. Those who used to be pacifists by honest conviction are experiencing a change of heart. They are forsaking pacifism and drawing nearer to the idea of revolutionary struggle against capitalism as the cause of war. This was one lesson taught by the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress. Those, on the other hand, who were not the deceived but the deceivers in the pacifist movements are now revealing themselves more and more to the masses as the pacifist agents in this work of preparation for imperialist war and intervention.

The "revalorisation of all values," that expression of disbelief in all traditional ideologies



which always tends to crop up among the bourgeoisie in all crises of capitalism, extends to all spheres of bourgeois ideology, but more especially to the problem of the possibility of survival for the capitalist system itself.

Those political and economic leaders, leading ideologists of the bourgeoisie, who still entertain the belief that capitalism can continue as of old, are "white ravens" indeed. The words of the bourgeois, as well as social-democratic economic healers of the bourgeoisie concerning "late-capitalism" and "organised capitalism," only seek to veil the hideous fact that for them capitalism has come to the end of its tether and that of course an attempt must be made to save it somehow. Optimists are scarce. But their optimism is no less impotent than the gloomy forebodings of the pessimists.

"The danger that man will become the slave of his tool," wrote Prof. Adolf Weber, one of the optimistic champions of capitalism after the crisis had set in, "cannot be averted by changing the economic system, but only by influencing the patterns of thought and soul-life of man."

The accentuated crisis of capitalist economy surely greets this inane prattle with derisive laughter. For it "freed" forty to fifty million proletarians, who had become unemployed, from the "slavery of their tools." It never even permitted the millions of youth to reach the status of "slaves of their tools." "Influence upon the patterns of thought and the soul-life of man"—that is social-democracy; that is fascism. *How long they will suffice to stem the rising tide of the proletariat beating against the capitalist*

system, against the bourgeoisie, is to-day the greatest worry of the capitalists and their ideology manufacturers.

*In this period of "grave doubt," of the "revalorisation of all values," when everything in economy, in the machinery of power, in the ideology of capitalism, has been shaken to its deepest foundations, the edifice of Marxian doctrine stands firm and proud in all its parts and particles, untouched by the crisis of ideologies.*

Prof. Schmalenbach, a most prominent bourgeois theoretician of industrial economy, has said with resignation:

"What difference is there in essence between what we are going through to-day and the fulfilment of the predictions made by Marx, the great socialist?"

Nor is it this "recognition" of Marx on the part of an ideologist of the bourgeoisie that most glaringly characterises the discomfiture of bourgeois ideology and its defeat by Marxism-Leninism. The following is perhaps less self-evident but none the less much more characteristic: *the turning of the bourgeoisie, in its period of decline, away from everything it had created during its period of ascent.* Marx and Engels—however much their theory was "rooted in the material economic facts"—in the theoretical elaboration of scientific socialism, derived their start from the best that the young bourgeoisie had created in its period of ascent in the realm of ideology, that being "the thought material on hand."

This "thought material on hand" was supplied by *German classical philosophy—primarily Hegel, English classical political economy, prim-*



arily *Smith* and *Ricardo*, and *French socialism*, primarily *Saint Simon* and *Fourier*. The elaboration of *scientific socialism*, of *Communism*, by *Marx* and *Engels*, proceeded theoretically in the form of a *critique* of these doctrines, i.e., by contrasting these doctrines with the objective facts and their coherence. All that transcended in these systems the limited borders of bourgeois thinking was rescued by *Marx* and *Engels* and given over to the proletariat.

*The putrescent bourgeoisie in the period of its decline repudiates even the remnants of those intellectual products produced in the heyday of its development as a class.*

*Hugo Schulz*, a bourgeois economist, recently confessed that the bourgeoisie had to abandon *the classical theory of political economy* as it could not combat *Marxism* from the standpoint of this theory. The period of the present crisis is the period of a revival of vulgar economy in the camp of bourgeois science to an extent never witnessed before. A refutation of *all law* in economy, and the rejection of every theory, is the main trait of these hirelings of bourgeois economy. For them the economic crisis is not a consequence of the regular economic development, its cause does not lie "in economy" but "in the soul"; it is a "crisis of confidence." Vulgar economics like this have nothing in common with the classical theory of political economy which the best representatives of the young bourgeoisie elaborated in the struggle against feudalism that the capitalist method of production might be victorious.

*German classical philosophy*, which translated the great French revolution into the field of philo-

sophy for the cowardly German bourgeoisie, is to-day as dead as a door nail as far as it (the German bourgeoisie) is concerned. Hegel, greatest representative of the classical school, is again singled out by the bourgeoisie for treatment as a "dead dog." *Marx* and *Engels* linked up the dialectic method with the revolutionary side of Hegelian philosophy. They stripped dialectics of their mystical covering of Hegelian idealism. They turned dialectics "up-side down" by demonstrating that the "ideal" is nothing else than the "material" converted and translated in the mind of man.

The bourgeoisie in the period of its crisis had to repudiate Hegel since his dialectics were intolerable for it even in their idealistic covering. Hegelian dialectics preclude precisely that which is most necessary for the ideologists of the bourgeoisie in the course of the crisis: *the contemplation of the existing, of the existing order of society, as something endowed with finality.*

Flight from truth, flight into the "intellectual," is a general phenomenon in bourgeois science. The one takes refuge in religion—not only Christian religions, but also the ancient heathen religions, as certain fascist tendencies in Germany do, in oriental religions, in Buddhism, like the English theosophists. Within the bourgeoisie multifarious schools of philosophical mysticism prosper. It is the religion of the refined bourgeoisie, which has lost faith in the Christian as well as in the Jewish god, inasmuch as the Jewish god in his unity and the Christian god in all his trinity have proved themselves incapable of preserving capitalism from the crisis.

Not even the youth is spared this flight from



the truth. The youth movement which finds expression in the "back to nature" ideologies: the cult of the old Germanic, of the Celtic, all sorts of vegetarian sects, religious pacifism, etc., are nothing but disintegrated products of bourgeois ideology.

Social-democracy too takes flight "into the intellectual." The English trade union bureaucrats and American Socialist leaders unite their bureaucratic functions in the labour organisations with the post of preachers in various ecclesiastical sects. Religious socialists find more favour in the social-democratic parties than radical free-thinkers. Sollmann, a German social-democratic leader, professes positive Catholicism. Otto Bauer has become nothing less than a god-seeker who has elevated a timeless, spaceless, and classless "freedom of conscience" to be his social-democratic god. The worst kinds of inane idealism have replaced the old French materialism and even the idealism of classical German philosophy.

In France the various radical-socialist tendencies—which in a certain sense consider themselves *heirs of the French Revolution and French socialism*—have discarded all semblance of kinship with the great utopians of French socialism and the great French Revolution. The socialism of the great utopians sallied forth from the traditions of the French Revolution to the watchwords: *liberty, equality, fraternity*. For these watchwords the radical-socialist groups in France have substituted the trinity: *Panama-scandal-corruption*.

*To-day more than ever it is appropriate, is the high duty of every Communist, of every young Communist worker, to bear aloft the flag of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary "doctrine*

*of the conditions of victory the working class," to make Marxism-Leninism the common property of all proletarians seeking a world philosophy and emancipation. This duty now becomes paramount in the period of "grave doubt," which has penetrated even the ranks of the proletarian youth.*

Special significance attaches to-day to Lenin's words: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." Millions of youth—without any trade or profession, millions of adults who are losing their professional training through unemployment, who have been thrown upon the street, are now in quest not only of "room to live" but also of a "principle of life," of a guide to action that will enable them to win for themselves "room to live." They need a revolutionary theory to be able to resist the seduction of fascist demagoguery, of social-democratic hypocrisy.

The bourgeoisie not only holds on to its positions in the process of production; retains its hold on capitalist private property with all possible tenacity, with all the power of its material force up to and even after its overthrow, but also insists upon the propagation of its ideology no matter how low it is laid by the crisis. It does this the more in view of the fact that this ideology also represents a measure of power which helps it to maintain its shaken domination.

Fascism it is which, as a method of government having recourse openly to armed force, to terror, and as an ideology which is being applied wherever and whenever social-democracy alone is not adequate to act as intermediary in bringing bourgeois influence into the working class to keep the indignant proletariat in check, is the expression



of this tenacious, desperate *life-and-death struggle* of capitalism *for its domination*, for its very existence.

To free the workers won by fascism, especially the young workers, from the ideology of despair that drove them to fascism is possible only in a persevering struggle conducted with the weapons of Marxist-Leninist theory. This, of course, refers no less to the masses of workers and young workers which directly or indirectly, under the influence of social-democracy, are unwilling props in the main support of bourgeois dictatorship. The superiority of Marxism-Leninism as the consciousness of the working class over fascism and social-fascism cannot be doubted. Here the question is, on the one hand, only this: that *our practice in the political-economic struggle* has not been sufficiently pervaded by this theory; on the other hand, that our *theoretical struggle* lags far behind the requirements necessary to destroy the ideological-political influence of social-democracy and fascism in the working class.

Let us be honest with ourselves, comrades. Let each one take stock of himself and confess how often he remembers that the historical struggle of the proletariat *does not proceed only in two forms of struggle*. How often are we mindful of what Engels wrote and what Lenin and Stalin always emphasised—that the historical struggle for the liberation of the proletariat must proceed not only in two forms, in the form of the *political* and *economic* struggle, but in three forms: in the form of the political, economic and *theoretical* struggle, if the proletariat is to attain victory.

I have no doubt but that especially *the neglect of the economic front of the class struggle*, the boy-

cotting of trade union work on the part of many revolutionists which is customary in the Communist Parties—to-day rather covert but none the less existent—is the consequence of the *inadequate theoretical insight* into the conditions and methods of the revolutionary class struggle, the consequence of the lack of knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory.

I now put another question, comrades: How often are we mindful of the facts recorded by Engels back in 1875, the beginning of the *socialist* mass movement, when he stated that:

“ *Indifference to all theory . . . .* is one of the main causes responsible for the fact that the English labour movement, despite all the excellent organisations of its individual apparatus, creeps along at such a snail's pace; and on the other hand, for the mischief and confusion which Proudhonism in its original form wrought among the French and the Belgians, and in a form more caricatured by Bakunin among the Spaniards and Italians.”

Translate this, English, French, Spanish and Italian comrades, into the language of the present-day movement in your respective countries. Think of the narrow “ *practicism* ” of the leaders of the *English trade unions* and of the Labour Party who “ *reject all theory*,” in order to be able under this guise the more easily to smuggle all kinds of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories such as the theory of industrial peace and of guild socialism into the working class. Think of *French syndicalism* which exhibits many essential reactionary traces of petty-bourgeois Proudhonist anarchism; think of the reformist syndicalists, of the Minorities within and without the C.G.T.U.! Think



of the *Spanish anarcho-syndicalists* who were and are the props of bourgeois counter-revolution in Spain and who with their caricature revolutionism mislead many good revolutionary workers and keep them back from the struggle for the advancing of the bourgeois democratic revolution into the stage of proletarian revolution.

And you, young Communists of Germany! Remember what Engels wrote concerning the German working class in whose ranks Marx fought his first battles:

"The German workers must be given credit for the fact that they exploited the advantage of their situation (as the birthplace of Marxism—B. K.) with rare ingenuity. For the first time since a labour movement has been in existence is the struggle being conducted harmoniously, co-ordinatedly and planfully on all its three fronts, the theoretical, the political and the practical-economic (resistance against the capitalists). Precisely in this what may be called *concentrated* attack lies the strength and invincibility of the German movement."

Remember that in your victories also this *good* tradition of the German labour movement is and will continue to be effective; but reflect also whether the degree of concentration of the struggle to-day does not leave much to be desired in many instances.

No doubt the fact that we have been unable to enlarge our *mass influence* at the expense of Social-Democracy in all countries, of the anarcho-syndicalists in Spain and South America, of the reformist trade union leaders in the entire world, to the extent that this may have been possible in the given objective situation, is largely due to our

failure to conduct our *agitational and propaganda work* among the masses sufficiently on principle, with an adequate Marxist-Leninist basis. To-day when everything—the crisis, the revolutionary upsurge, the end of capitalist stabilisation, the *great fundamental questions, questions of principle*, of the struggle for and the way to socialism, the question Dictatorship or Democracy? when the victories of socialist construction in the Soviet Union—places the question of classless society now confronting the broad masses of the workers inevitably upon the order of the day, this is an *especially grave shortcoming in our mass work*. The point is that Social-Democracy, because of the trouncing it is receiving at the hands of the revolutionary working masses in the capitalist countries, feels compelled to act as if it wanted to return to a "policy of principle." The "Left" manoeuvres denote a broader exploitation of pseudo-Marxian phraseology. These attempts to mislead the workers through these pseudo-Marxist phrases can be combatted successfully only by unfolding a thorough *propaganda of Marxism-Leninism* and by basing our day-to-day policy on a broad footing upon basic principles. Likewise dryness, pedanticism, bureaucracy, these poisonous weeds that often take root in our mass work and which youth can bear least—these too can be fought with no better means than by imbuing our day-to-day work with the *revolutionary spirit and ardour of Marxism-Leninism*.

Nor let us forget the *problem of cadres*, a question that is in as bad shape as our mass work. How can we burrow deep enough if in dealing with this question we do not act on the directions given by Engels:



"It is the duty of the leaders to enlighten themselves more and more on all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases appertaining to the old world philosophy and ever to bear in mind that socialism since it has become a science must needs be treated like one, i.e., be studied. The point will be to disseminate with steadily mounting zeal among the workers the increasingly clarified discernment thus gained, to weld the organisations of the Party as well as of the trade union associations ever closer together."

Who can assert that the "influence of traditional phrases appertaining to the old world philosophy"—above all *Social-Democratic conceptions* in the Communist Parties as well as in the sections of the Young Communist International—is non-existent and does not act as a stumbling block on our way to conquer the majority of the working class? One should not seek comfort in the belief that youth has no Social-Democratic traditions like their elders. Unfortunately the fact is that neither age nor youth guard against folly. Social-Democratic conceptions percolate into the Communist movement not only via custom and traditions. The strenuous efforts of the petty-bourgeoisie seeking to maintain its existence finds expression also in the ideological pressure which this moribund medial stratum of society (incapable itself of conducting any independent policy), steadily exerts upon the working class. The strength of the labour aristocracy consists not so much in its numbers as in its key position in production—especially to-day in the period of the crisis—and it is precisely this position which is

utilised as a conduit to pump bourgeois ideology into the broad masses of the workers. *Social-Democracy* is nothing more or less than the bourgeois poison that is inoculated through the petty-bourgeoisie, through the labour aristocracy, day by day into the heads of the workers. The sole and exclusive antidote in the Marxist-Leninist enlightenment of the workers through cadres trained for that purpose. It would be a denial of Marxism-Leninism, which is the revolutionary consciousness of the working class, an anti-Bolshevik deference to spontaneity, to think that without a thorough Marxist-Leninist education the officials of our Party and youth organisation can be made into leading *Bolshevik cadres* free from petty-bourgeois social-democratic inhibitions, into cadres that understand politics—the art of figuring with millions, the art of leading millions—who, in the coming war will do their bit without any hesitancy, who can lead the proletariat to victory!

Look at the Party of the Bolsheviks, hardened and steeled in three revolutions, in civil wars and last but not least in splits and in the struggle for the erection of the united front of the working class! This Party learnt the art of conquering in the political and economic struggle by never neglecting the theoretical struggle, by making splendid use of the burnished weapons of Marxist theory in the struggle against the Mensheviks as well as the "Left" currents.

Consider our two greatest and most victorious leaders: Lenin, the greatest theoretician and tactician of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat—and the perpetuator of his work, Stalin, the theoretician and tactician of



socialist construction. It was and is their greatest source of strength, and at the same time their greatest pride, that they were and are the best disciples of Marx and Engels who devoted a major portion of their knowledge and their revolutionary fighting energy to the struggle on the theoretical front, to the defence of Marxism-Leninism against every counterfeit.

Proud and eager for battle we claim :

*Marx is ours !*

But we must *take possession* of him if we are to be accoutred for battle and victorious.

We must permit the broad masses of adult and young workers *to share this possession* of ours, so that they may be transformed into conscious fighters for the cause of the liberation of the working class and into conscious builders of socialism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

East and West, North and South, the proletarian millions rally to the red banner of the Communist International of Marx, Engels and Lenin ! From the tops of the industrial titans of the Soviet Union the five beams of light radiating from the Soviet star illumine the path to be trod by the proletarians and oppressed peoples of all five continents, who crave and fight for *bread, work and liberation*. The capitalist system, the power of the exploiters and oppressors, the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie, rocks to its very foundations. The more we strain our every effort to see to it that Marxist *theory* penetrates the masses, the more this theory becomes the *force* that will deal the *death blow* to the power of the bourgeoisie !

*The time has come* for the proletariat to carry out this world-liberating deed in pursuance of its historical mission discovered by Marx : *it is now !*

Let the petty bourgeois denizens, the pedants, the philistines, the counterfeiters of Marxism, the traitors to the working class, the murderers of its best leaders and fighters shriek to their hearts' content about the " dislocation, ruin and chaos " which it is claimed the revolution will call forth—the proletariat, flying the flags of the Communist International, will pursue its road plotted by Marx and Engels and graded by Lenin and Stalin. The call then is forward along the road of struggle for the socialist revolution, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the victory of communism throughout the world !



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